

Healthy Communities Strategy #11: COVID-19 Communication Campaign

Implement an approved communications/messaging campaign addressing COVID-19 prevention and/or vaccination.

Expected Outcome:

Implementation of a communications messaging campaign that addresses COVID-19 prevention and/or vaccination. Communication campaign may include traditional media campaign implementation using one or more medium, e.g., billboards, television or radio advertisements, social media, etc., and/or non-media, group education/virtual education activities that educate the public about COVID-19 prevention and vaccination.

Develop a health communications strategy with culturally and linguistically responsive materials and messengers, for disseminating accurate COVID-19 prevention and/or vaccination information in plain language, lessening adverse effects of mitigation strategies, and emphasizing importance of wellness visits and preventive care including promotion/education for COVID-19 vaccines.

Health Equity Planning Principals:

The population health impact of COVID-19 has exposed longstanding inequities that have systematically undermined the physical, social, economic, and emotional health of racial and ethnic minority populations and other population groups that are bearing a disproportionate burden of COVID-19.

Persistent health disparities combined with historic housing patterns, work circumstances, and other factors have put members of some racial and ethnic minority populations at higher risk for COVID-19 infection, severe illness, and death. As we continue to learn more about the impact of COVID-19 on the health of different populations, immediate action is critical to reduce growing COVID-19 disparities among the populations known to be at disproportionate risk¹ including:

- Racial and ethnic minority populations.
- People living in rural or frontier areas.
- People experiencing homelessness.
- Essential and frontline workers.
- People with disabilities.
- People with substance use disorders.
- People who are justice-involved (incarcerated individuals).
- Non-U.S.-born people.

Recommended Partners:

Hospital staff • local government • law enforcement • EMS • community coalitions • community groups • schools • Department of Social Services • faith communities • local media • local chambers of commerce • local businesses • behavioral health organizations • homeless shelters • nonprofit organizations • local libraries

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/cdc-strategy.html>



Intervention Examples:

- A. The local health department hosted an online/live town series: Let's Talk COVID, with each hour conversation featuring local stakeholders, influencers, subject matter experts and residents to discuss a pressing or trending topic. Series topics included: 1) What it means to be high-risk - spotlight on prediabetes, aging, and healthy eating; 2) Mind & Body Connection - discussion centering on mental health resources for adults, social context/trauma in COVID, and telehealth/medicine for resources for behavioral health needs; 3) Online Learning and Student Health - school leaders, student services directors, and student advocates shared resources on student health plans, social emotional learning assessments, food resources, and strategies for supporting students in COVID. All editions have simultaneous Spanish translation. Also, two episodes were convened in Spanish - with simultaneous English translation.
- B. A local health department used all the materials provided by NC DHHS to push the 3W's, Count on Me NC's Covid-19 safe protocols for restaurants and businesses, and other safety issues on their social media page. They also collaborated with their county's social service agency to disseminate all possible resources (Pandemic EBT, online counseling for mental health, substance misuse counseling, etc.) for those affected by the COVID pandemic. A separate social media push was conducted to raise community awareness about where and when fresh foods would be available at the local food pantries.
- C. A district health department partnered with its Chamber of Commerce in several counties to launch a region-wide campaign called "Show Your Love." Organizations came together to place signage across the entire region, including billboards and traditional signage. This campaign included the following key components: 1) Increase awareness of actions we can all take to slow the spread of COVID-19 while grounding those in acts of kindness for others, and 2) Encourage individuals to take action to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. Key Messages included: 1) Show Your Love, Practice the 3Ws – Wear a face covering, Wash your hands, Wait 6 feet from others and 2) Show Your Love, Stay Home if You're Sick.

Related Programs:

Since the start of the pandemic, North Carolina took early and aggressive action to slow the spread of the virus, manage shortages of testing and PPE supplies, develop hospital surge plans, and build testing and contact tracing capabilities. Collective actions prevented our health care systems from being overwhelmed and provided valuable time to build our state's capacity to respond to the crisis. North Carolina is taking appropriate actions – based on data from testing, tracing and trends and in consultation with members of the business community – to slow the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic and save lives.

Recommended Tools/Resources

- A. CDC Health Communication Playbook
<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/clearwriting/docs/health-comm-playbook-508.pdf>
- B. CDC COVID-19 Response Health Equity Strategy: Accelerating Progress Towards Reducing COVID-19 Disparities and Achieving Health Equity



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/cdc-strategy.html>

- C. CDC Communication Resources for Health Departments
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/communications.html>
- D. COVID-19 One Stop Shop Communication Toolkits
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/toolkits/index.html>

North Carolina Resources:

- A. Prevent and Protect Media Toolkit
<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/materials-resources/prevent-and-protect-media-toolkit>
- B. Count on Me NC – Evidence based voluntary training forum for restaurants, hotels, and other businesses to implement Covid-19-safe protocols.
<https://countonmenc.org/>

Data Sources

- A. COVID-19 Information Hub
<https://www.nc.gov/covid19>

